and strengthening export capability.

A number of Programmes with the assistance of various international agencies have also been undertaken to improve the production technology and marketing etc., in the leather sector. The Government has also permitted duty free import of raw hides and skins, chrome tanned leather, crust leather, finished leather, to augment availability of leather.

In order to ensure quality of Indian Leather and Leather goods, the Bureau of Indian Standards is coordinating the activities of the ISO/TC-120/Leather/EN Standards/EEC regulation/harmonisation of Indian standards of footwear and other leather items with ISO standards.

(c) to (e) While some seizures of *leather hides and skins have been made* by our agencies at our borders, there are no official reports of large-scale smuggling of leather hides and skins across neighbouring countries. However, with a view to check smuggling on these borders, our agencies have strengthened the vigilance and intelligence set up on our borders.

Controls in International Trade

733. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even after 15 months of trade liberalisation policy announcement, plethora of controls continue to be in operation and the Chief Controller of Imports and Exports continue to operate and Director General International Trade alongwith supporting and associated officers; and

(b) the details of action contemplated to remove the controls?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Under the Current Export and Import Policy, all items may be exported or imported freely, except to the extent they are regulated by the two small Negative Lists for Imports/Exports and other provisions of the Exim Policy or any other law for the time being in force.

The Director General of Foreign Trade and his officers are enjoined with the responsibilities cast upon under Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992 and the Exim Policy. Since the new Liberalised policy, there has been a significant shift in their responsibilities from 'Control' and 'Regulation' to Export Promotion and Development.

734. *[Transferred to 5th March, 1993.]*

Fall in Exports due to Ayodhya Incidents

735. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the exports are likely to fall by Rs. 1000/- crore this year due to Ayodhya issue and subsequent violence all over the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Although it is difficult to quantify the effects of disturbances due to Ayodhya issue on exports, these disturbances have adversely affected export performance.

Success of EPZ and EOU

736. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
SHRI N.E. BALARAM:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the concept of Export Processing Zone (EPZ) of Export Oriented Units (EOU) has failed to take off in India whereas it has been successful in China, Mexico, Mauritius and a number of other countries;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to make them successful?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The schemes for Export Oriented Units (EOUs) and Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in India have evoked encouraging response and exports from this sector are steadily growing. However, some recent measures to make the EOU/EPZ scheme even more

attractive include the facility to convert the entire export earnings at market rate of exchange, delegation and decentralisation of powers and simplification of policy/procedures.

Non Payment of salaries to Employees of M.T.C.

737. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 1,000 workers of the Mica Trading Corporation of India Limited have not been getting their salaries since November, 1992;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are being taken to pay their salaries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Due to acute financial constraints, MITCO has not been able to pay the salaries of its employees since November, 1992. The case of MITCO has been referred to BIFR as a sick industrial company for a decision on the future of the company.

US Investigation against Indian Exporters

738. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the US administration has decided to launch anti-dumping investigations against twenty Indian exporters of steel flanges; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The US administration has decided to launch anti-dumping investigations in response to an anti-dumping petition against import of steel flanges from India. Fourteen Indian exporters of steel flanges have been named in the petition.

(b) The US International Trade Commission has made a preliminary affirmative determination in the case on 9 Februray, 1993. A similar determination has been made in respect of steel flanges imported from Taiwan. No anti-dumping duties are imposed at this stage. As a result of the ITC's determination, the US Department of Commerce will continue to conduct anti-dumping investigations in the case.

A general protectionist trend has been discerned in the USA and this is manifested by increased reliance placed on anti-dumping and countervailing duty actions.

Promoting Exports

739. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:
SHRI IQBAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of India's exports and imports during the first nine months of the current financial year;

(b) what is the manner in which these compare with those of the same period of the last two years; and

(c) the details of steps taken by Government to increase exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The details of India's exports and imports during the first nine months i.e. April-December, 1992-93 as compared with those of the same period during 1990-91 and 1991-92 are as under:—

(Value : Rs. Crores)

April-Dec. 1990-91	April-Dec. 1991-92	April-Dec. 1992-93
23189	30332	37329
31724	34238	47480

(c) Several changes in trade policy were introduced since July, 1991 aimed at strengthening export incentives, eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and retionalising the import tariff structure. Rupee has been made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange. These have been further consolidated in the new Export-Import Policy which, *inter-alia*, aims to promote productivity,